

8505 Hempstead Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20817

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March 19, 1999

Commissioner Jane E. Henney, M.D.
FDA (HFE-88)
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20815

Dear Commissioner Henney:

I have read some articles on the irradiation of foods and I would like to express my opinion. I think the FDA should not irradiate food for the following three reasons.

The cost of irradiation is too high. Health and Fitness says "It can be too expensive, adding as much as .05 cents per pound to the price of some fresh produce." It also would cost \$12 Million dollars to build the plants where the food would be irradiated.

Food might be spoiled and you won't know it. Health & Fitness says, "It can kill the organisms that send out signals and odors that can warn people that the food they are eating is spoiled." But it might not kill the germs that cause food poisoning.

Irradiation slows the aging process. One example of this is, you might want a pear but it isn't ripe yet. You might have to wait a couple of days to eat it because it had been irradiated. Martha Groves in the Home Edition of the Los Angeles Times says "You might be able to buy a cooked chicken that was irradiated that had been on the shelf for 8 years", because the aging process was halted. The thought of that would be disgusting.

Also, this process might be hiding the danger of long term effects of eating irradiated food, it may cause cancer, or other illnesses.

In conclusion, I think irradiation is not going to be accepted by today's people because they would have to pay higher costs the people who work for the company might be hiding an important safety issue. Also, irradiation is an unnatural way of preserving food that is not needed with our other safety processes in place.

Sincerely

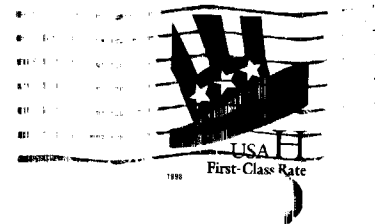
Andrew Roarty

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Commissioner John E. Hanger
MDA (HFE-88)

5600 Fisher Lane
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